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Mr. G. Rameswara Rao :—" The answer given to this question is 'The Government are not aware that this is a fact'. May I know to which portion of clause (*a*) of the question this answer refers, whether it is with reference to the making over of the lands to the Labour Department or whether it is with reference to the assignment on darkhast to various applicants ? "

The hon. Mr. N. E. Marjoribanks :—" The first portion of clause (*a*) of the question asks 'Whether Government are aware that the lands reserved as grazing grounds for the benefit of ryots have been made over to the Labour Department'. The answer must necessarily be to that portion."

Mr. G. Rameswara Rao :—" May I take it that lands have been reserved as grazing grounds ? "

The hon. Mr. N. E. Marjoribanks :—" No, Sir."

Mr. P. Peddiraju :—" Arising out of the answer given, may I know whether the hon. the Revenue Member is aware that communal porambokes are generally reserved for grazing grounds and whether he is granting these communal porambokes to Adi-Dravidas ? "

The hon. Mr. N. E. Marjoribanks :—" I am not able to answer the question in that general form. It all depends upon what the hon. Member means by communal porambokes."

Suspension of village officers in Tanjore taluk.

* 1538 *Q.*—Mr. S. Muttayya Mudaliyar : Will the hon. the Member for Revenue be pleased to state—

(*a*) whether it is a fact that about seventy village officers have been suspended during the last six months in the Tanjore taluk, in the Tanjore district ;

(*b*) whether the number of punishments was greater during the last six months than at any corresponding period before ; and

(*c*) what the offences are for which they have been punished ?

A.—(*a*), (*b*) & (*c*) The Government have no information.

Mr. S Muttayya Mudaliyar :—" The answer given to this question is 'The Government have no information'. Am I to understand that Government called for this information and they did not get it ? "

The hon. Mr. N. E. Marjoribanks :—" I did not call for it."

Mr. S. Muttayya Mudaliyar :—" May I know, Sir, why ? "

The hon. Mr. N. E. Marjoribanks :—" That is a matter in which local officers have full authority. I exercised my discretion and found that it was unnecessary to call for any information."

Mr. S. Muttayya Mudaliyar :—" I am perfectly aware that local officers have full authority in the matter. But I would point out that it is rather extraordinary that seventy village officers have been suspended during the last six months in the Tanjore taluk alone. Had it not been for the extraordinary way in which these unfortunate village officers were punished,

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nobody would have thought it worth while to table this question. If the hon. Member wants further information I may refer him to certain paragraph in a letter which was sent to me some days back in which it was stated that during the last six months about 100 village officers had been dismissed and about Rs. 1,000 were collected from some in the shape of fine. I wish to know whether Government think that in their discretion this is a normal state of affairs, that it is not necessary to call for any information and that I have wrongly used my discretion in putting this question."

The hon. Mr. N. E. Marjoribanks :—" I did not question the hon. Member's discretion in putting this question. I merely stated that in my discretion I did not find it necessary to call for the information."

Mr. S. Muttayya Mudaliyar :—" On having exercised his discretion if he has found that the dismissal of 100 officers within six months and the fining of some officers to the extent of Rs. 1,000 is a normal state of affairs and that he did not think it necessary to call for the information, and he having admitted that I exercised my discretion properly, I request him to revise his discretion. I only wish to point out that the hon. Member was probably not conscious of the whole extent of the grievances to which these unfortunate officers were subjected to and it was therefore that he did not call for the information."

Mr. A. Ranganatha Mudaliyar :—" May I know the reason why the hon. the Revenue Member who was praising these village officers so highly the other day did not think it necessary to call for the information especially when it is stated that they were so indiscriminately punished ? "

The hon. Mr. N. E. Marjoribanks :—" I do not admit the hypothesis."

Mr. C. V. Venkataramana Ayyangar :—" Sir, in the letter that appeared in the papers probably day before yesterday it was stated that Rs. 1,000 had been collected from these poor village officers of the Tanjore taluk within a period of one or two months. I wish to know whether such is the case. We want to reduce the pay of these poor officers. Under these circumstances, if the hon. Member gets the information, and if he finds that corroborates ours, then I suggest that he may look into the matter carefully."

The hon. Mr. N. E. Marjoribanks :—" If any of these things were true, and if any unfortunate person was aggrieved, he has got the right of appeal. I do not see any other information on this matter placed before this House except the statement that several of the village officers were punished. The Government have not received any appeal from the aggrieved persons. Under these circumstances I do not feel I will be justified in intervening in this matter at this stage. I gather that the officers have neither sent a petition to the Collector nor are about to send one to him, although they are at liberty to do so."

Mr. A. Ranganatha Mudaliyar :—" Does the hon. Member accept that all these officers have full power to do as they like ? "

The hon. Mr. N. E. Marjoribanks :—" I do not say so. I said the local officers have full power to deal with the matter on its own merits."

Mr. C. V. Venkataramana Ayyangar :—" My experience is that—the hon. the Revenue Member also knows it—these village officers hesitate to appeal against the order of the Divisional Officer even if they are fined one or

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two rupees. I would therefore only appeal to him to see if he cannot find out whether what is stated in this question is a fact and do something in the matter, at least by confidentially advising his subordinates."

Mr. S. Muttayya Mudaliyar :—" May I ask whether the punishment of 100 village officers in the course of six months and the fining of Rs. 1,000 is a normal state of affairs and whether this is the way in which the administration of the Revenue Department is to be conducted ? "

The hon. the President :—" The hon. the Revenue Member has already stated that he is not impressed either by the number or the severity of the punishments."

Mr. S. Muttayya Mudaliyar :—" I am only asking whether this state of affairs exists in every district."

The hon. Mr. N. E. Marjoribanks :—" I do not wish to go into hypothetical questions."

Mr. S. Muttayya Mudaliyar :—" That is not a hypothetical question. It is a fact which I stated. If this is taken as the normal state of things which exists in every taluk in other districts, I ask whether it is worth while to carry on the administration of the Revenue Department with such officers."

The hon. Mr. N. E. Marjoribanks :—" I do not admit the inference."

Criminal Tribes.

Persons proposed to be registered under the Criminal Tribes Act, from 1913 to 1925.

*1539 *Q.*—Mr. G. Rameswara Rao : Will the hon. the Home Member be pleased to state—

(*a*) the total number of persons proposed for registration under the Criminal Tribes Act from 1913 till the end of 1925 in each year ;

(*b*) whether the whole lot so proposed were registered ; and

(*c*) whether any reasons were given as to why each of the individuals should be registered ?

A.—(*a*), (*b*) & (*c*) Proposals for registration under the Criminal Tribes Act are not submitted to Government in respect of persons individually. Proposals are submitted in respect of a tribe and the tribe is notified as a criminal tribe, if the Government are satisfied that the members are addicted to the systematic commission of non-bailable offences. When they issue a notification, the Government at the same time direct the District Magistrate to make, or cause to be made, a register of the members of the tribe within the limits of his jurisdiction. The District Magistrate has power to exempt any member of the tribe from registration. The selection of members of the tribe for registration is a matter within the discretion of the District Magistrate and reasons for their registration are not furnished by him to Government.